



## Combined effects of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Gustav on the mental health of mothers of small children

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### Abstract:

Few studies have assessed the results of multiple exposures to disaster. Our objective was to examine the effect of experiencing Hurricane Gustav on mental health of women previously exposed to Hurricane Katrina. A total of 102 women from Southern Louisiana were interviewed by telephone. Experience of the hurricanes was assessed with questions about injury, danger and damage, while depression was assessed with the Edinburgh Depression Scale and post-traumatic stress disorder using the Post-Traumatic Checklist. Minor stressors, social support, trait resilience and perceived benefit had been measured previously. Mental health was examined with linear and log-linear models. Women who had a severe experience of both Gustav and Katrina scored higher on the mental health scales, but finding new ways to cope after Katrina or feeling more prepared was not protective. About half the population had better mental health scores after Gustav than at previous measures. Improvement was more likely among those who reported high social support or low levels of minor stressors, or were younger. Trait resilience mitigated the effect of hurricane exposure. Multiple disaster experiences are associated with worse mental health overall, although many women are resilient. Perceiving benefit after the first disaster was not protective.

**Source:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2850.2010.01658.x>

### Resource Description

#### Communication: ☒

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

#### Communication Audience: ☒

audience to whom the resource is directed

Public

#### Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event, Human Conflict/Displacement

**Extreme Weather Event:** Hurricanes/Cyclones

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

## **Geographic Feature:**

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Ocean/Coastal

## **Geographic Location:**

resource focuses on specific location

United States

## **Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):**

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

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## **Health Impact:**

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Mental Health/Stress

**Mental Health Effect/Stress:** Stress Disorder

## **Medical Community Engagement:**

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

## **Mitigation/Adaptation:**

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

## **Population of Concern:** A focus of content

## **Population of Concern:**

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Low Socioeconomic Status, Pregnant Women, Racial/Ethnic Subgroup

**Other Racial/Ethnic Subgroup:** Not specified

## **Resource Type:**

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

## **Resilience:**

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

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### **Timescale:**

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

### **Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:**

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content